

What is mumps?

Mumps is an infection caused by a virus.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Symptoms include fever, headache, earache, and one or more painful, swollen neck glands. Fever comes first, followed by pain when opening the mouth or eating. Swelling caused by mumps usually goes away in about 10 days. About 1/3 of people with mumps have no swelling in their glands, only presenting with a respiratory illness.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear between 16-18 days after exposure, with a range of 12-25 days.

How is mumps spread?

The virus is found in saliva. Mumps virus is spread through respiratory droplets (i.e. sneezing and coughing) or by direct contact with an ill person's saliva.

How is mumps diagnosed and treated?

Mumps is usually diagnosed through blood tests and cultures of the mouth. There is no specific treatment for mumps.

How long is a person infectious (contagious)?

Mumps is most infectious from 3 days before symptoms begin to about 5 days after symptom onset.

Can mumps be serious?

Most people with mumps have a mild illness, but it can cause meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord), encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), deafness, and inflammation of the ovaries or testicles. If a pregnant woman gets mumps in the first three months of pregnancy, she may have a miscarriage. Most adults born before 1957 have had mumps disease and are probably immune (cannot get infected again).

How can mumps be prevented?

Mumps is a vaccine-preventable disease. Washington State Immunization Law requires that all children have a record of immunization against mumps. The mumps vaccine is available in combination with measles and rubella vaccines (MMR) and is given as a single shot. Two doses of mumps vaccine are required for school entry. Side effects from mumps vaccine are very rare, the most common being soreness at the site of the shot, or rarely, joint pain or stiffness.

How do I know if my child or I have mumps?

A health care provider usually makes a diagnosis of mumps based on the symptoms; the diagnosis can be confirmed by blood tests. If you suspect you or your child may have mumps, please call your health care provider for advice.

Mumps is a Washington State reportable disease and must be reported to your local health department. In Snohomish County, contact Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response at 425.339.5278, Monday-Friday, 8:00AM-5:00PM.

Information online: <http://www.snohd.org/mumps>

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